

THE LIFE
OF
LEWIS CHARLTON

A POOR OLD SLAVE.

Who, for Twenty-Eight Years,

Suffered in American Bondage.

Mr. Charlton has now come out among the Christian People to solicit aid to build up his people out of the horrors and tortures of suffering, and it is hoped the Christian People will not fail to buy these books from the Poor Old Slave to help him to do the whole will of God.

PRICE, 25 CENTS.

*Prepared for the Press under His Own
Eye and Direction.*

Printed by PITTS & CROCKET, Fredericton, N. B.

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People often say to me, "Well, slavery is a thing of the past and what has been done cannot now be helped, so what is the good of talking and writing about it?" My answer is that all history is a thing of the past and yet people write and study it and consider well the lessons it may teach. The old story of Israel's bondage in Egypt is so old that it is obscure from very age and yet our Sunday School books repeat the tale. Our Sunday School children are told over and over again how Egypt's cruel kings enslaved the

Ancient Jews and how by Divine Agency they were led out of bondage. We linger over the pages that tell how the Jews suffered captivity in Babylon and were in the order of Providence restored to their homes. Why then should you think it of less interest to read how five millions of slaves in this nineteenth century, in this Christian republic, suffered the horrors of captivity, and were led out to freedom by the same hand that released the Jews from Egyptian and Assyrian tyrants. Is God dead that we cannot see His hand in this work? In the words of a prophet of old "Was God asleep or had He gone on a journey that *our* cry and wail of anguish reached not His ear?" By no means, for the arm of God was displayed in our emancipation. Lincoln was *our* Moses, and though no actual Red Sea parted its waters for our escape, no handwriting glowed on the walls the terror of rulers and despair of wise men, yet He who has promised to redeem the oppressed and break every chain was surely on the great battle fields of the rebellion, and at last delivered His people and smote the hands of our oppressors. The African's story of enslavement is one that has its lessons of profit for us all. It is a chapter of human history whose cruelties can never be more than rudely sketched. Its dark shadows of suffering will never be more than merely indicated by here and there a weak hand like my own. Millions of hearts wrung with unspeakable anguish have ceased to beat, millions of tongues that could have unfolded the most shocking tales of wretchedness are as silent now as the grave can make them. If here and there one like myself can set down somewhat of his bitter experience, somewhat of his trials and afflictions, is it not reasonable that people

should read and ponder well this story of a people's enslavement in a republic of liberty where Christian churches point their spires from every village and hamlet in the land. Our long bondage here is the one dark stain on the fair fame of this great nation, and all good citizens will do well to understand its depth of wickedness that they may always temper their boasts of national freedom with a becoming humility. When I sell one of these books I have not only made a few cents to be applied to a good purpose but I have left a lesson behind that some one will read and remember.

Reader, I have delayed too long, but I could not well introduce myself without a few words to them who will be good enough to read my little book.

I was born in the State of Maryland, near the Town of Buckinston, in the year 1814. My father was sold into Georgia when I was an infant in my mother's arms. He was of pure African blood. His father, Manuel Charlton, died since, I can remember, at the great age of 121 years. The old man was a slave for the space of 110 years. He well remembered when he was a little boy in Africa, and used to tell the story how he was enticed with many others aboard a slave ship and thus torn away from father and mother. I was born on the estate of Mr. Ignatius Davis, who was a kind-hearted man, but his wife was a violent, unfeeling woman, who plied the lash in the most cruel manner to the backs of the female slaves. From the time when I was two weeks old my mother was forced to leave me in her miserable quarters to shift for myself as best I could all day long while she was kept at the elbow of her mistress. All I suffered in those days neither I nor anyone else can ever tell;

but this much I know, that one cold day in winter being but fourteen months old and left alone as usual my mother returned at night to find both of my feet frozen stiff as stones. She did the best she knew and put warm poultices on my feet, and when she took them off in the morning my toes all came off on the poultices! So I was thus early crippled and never worked at all till I was six years old. My mistress was a loud talker in the Methodist meetings, and thought herself to be a christian woman and yet she could cause a helpless babe all that pain and distress, that in a measure has followed him through life, and never feel that she had done wrong; indeed when she saw my feet many years afterwards she laughed in my face and said "they looked liked her old gum-shoes!" The first event I can remember reaches back fifty eight years, when I was seven years old. I can recall the picture. I was placed on an auction block for sale. I recollect that my mother was crying, and took off my old socks and exposed my poor crippled stumps of feet in the vain hope that no one would buy me, but bought I was, and separated from my mother for the first time. My new owner was a cooper by trade and I cannot recall his name. He intended to teach me to work at his trade. He lived about six miles from my old home; my mother was obliged to go with me to the new home to pacify my crying. I can recollect it to this day. My master and mistress were very kind people and even made a little bed for me in their own sleeping room. They had no children, and I was their only slave. For three years I remained with them and all the time had no reason to complain. They used me as well as they would have treated a child of their own blood. But a

dark day came. My good mistress died and my master sold all and went away. I may as well say here that my first master had provided that I should be free when I was twenty eight years old, so that I was always sold with a perfect knowledge of this fact and add to this my crippled condition and it will be seen that in a money point of view I was not worth much care or attention and no pains taken to preserve my health to an advanced age. The next change of masters put me in the hands of a person named William Farnestock. I say person for it does not seem right to call such a creature a man. He was a tanner by trade and at once put me into the tannery to work. I was but a child, and yet he would set me to heavy work that I was unable to perform. Many a time I have been forced into the ice-cold vats as I tugged at the heavy hides. He would call me to him, strip me and beat me with a cowhide whip till the blood ran in streams from my back. So often did he do this that for months and months I was unable to sleep on my back. The wretched brute seemed to take great satisfaction in flogging me, a poor crippled child. His wife wished to be kind to me but it was little she could do with such a husband who seemed determined to make my life as miserable as he could make it. I was the only slave he owned and it seems as if my poor back had to take all that he would have bestowed upon more had they been in his power. Often have I been forced by him to take off my wet and frozen trowsers (yes frozen so stiff they would stand alone) and take his cowhiding and then dress again as best I could with icy clothes and go to work. It is every word as true as God made me, and yet it was all done in a christian land before the eyes of others.

and had he killed me there was no law to punish him. And yet I find people, not a few, who do not blush to say that slavery was not a bad institution. Let them try it as I have tried it, let them be scared and crippled, let them be brought up in ignorance and degradation and they would not be guilty of upholding such a monstrosity as slavery against all texts of Scripture that have been brought forward to sustain this wretched crime.

I am content to put the one sentence from the Great Master of Divine Truth. It is this: "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them." There is only one escape from this, and that is to deny that we are men — a position too foolish for me to stop for a moment to oppose it.

With this cruel master I remained nearly three years — years of horror and pain. When I found that a Sheriff's sale would dispose of me soon I was full of hope that some one would buy me who would at least have some feeling for me. It was a vain hope, for the change was for the worse instead of the better. I fell into the hands of Thomas Gettinger, of Frederick City. He owned a house in town and a farm eight miles out of town. He owned no other slaves and had no children. He was a godless, unscrupulous man. He kept me at work mostly on the farm or in the woods adjoining it. On Saturdays we would return to his house in the city. He gave me no rest on Sundays which I had always had before to myself, thus giving me a chance to see my mother occasionally. I had been used to a r.ide bed but this cruel fellow never, in the two years and a half I was with him, provided me with one. I was obliged to lay down

on the kitchen floor without covering or crawl into the straw in the stable or, in warm weather, a berth between the logs in the wood pile answered for a bed. If he had allowed me to sleep even in such places it would have been a comfort to me, but he would keep me at work of one kind and another for half the night and expect me to begin again hours before day. In fact it seemed as if he expected me to work all the time without rest or sleep. I slept with one eye open lest he should find me away from my task and beat me. In the matter of food I had to take what I could catch, and never had time to swallow my meals with any regularity. He would not whip me as badly as my last master, but strike me with whatever he had at hand, kick and cuff me in the most brutal manner, often knocking me senseless for an half hour at a time. I was continually the victim of his bad temper, and life could scarcely be more wretched than he made it for me. After serving him about two years and a half my release came in this way: I was working with him and some other hands in the woods getting out shingle stuff; it was a bitter cold day in winter and the snow was deep; my feet grew very cold and I wanted to come to the fire around which the men were working; he would not let me leave my work of trimming up the down trees, and when we started for home my feet and legs were frozen to the knees. My trousers were frozen fast to my legs. I was put on the team and carried to the farm house and placed in the kitchen without anyone doing a thing for my relief. What I suffered that dreadful night no tongue can tell. All alone a mere boy of less than sixteen years I was obliged to lie there on the floor with no one to help me

or pity me. In the morning he saw my condition and did nothing for me. He concluded that I was no good and never would be of any further service to him — very likely he thought I would die. He told a teamster to take me behind him on the horse and carry me to my mother who lived six or seven miles away. The teamster seated me behind him the next night and in the dark he reached my mother's hut. He helped me from the horse and rode away leaving me on the ground unable to move. I cried out till my mother came to the door. She found me lying there, carried me into the house and then for the first time was anything done for my relief. Nearly two days had passed since I was frozen and any one may judge of my condition by that time, and the wonder is that I did not die. My pain was dreadful to think of, and to this hour I have continued to suffer. These old limbs all shrunken, pitted and scarred are the homes of pain. Nights are often sleepless because of them. So I cannot forget my cruel bondage even if I would do so. At this time my mother was a free woman by provision of Mr. Davis. She earned a scanty living, washing and ironing, and for nine long months she nursed me with all a mother's tenderness. Gettinger never came to ask after my condition, nor so far as I know, did he ever make any claim to me. Seeing this my mother thought no one would disturb me and I would be left to herself. It was a hope like most others she had entertained, doomed to disappointment. A son of my first master, Mr. Davis, came to my mother's house and told her that I was to be sold on the place of Thomas Davis some miles away. I do not know to this day how that came about. I cannot see what

claim the Davis family had upon me. My mother was very wretched when she found that her poor lame boy was to be torn away from her. I was ordered to go ten miles to the sale and was obliged to walk the whole distance. My legs were covered with tarred clothes and the shin bones were as bare as if there never had been any flesh on them. In this condition I was sold at auction sale to Mr. Davis Richardson, a nephew of old Mr. Ignatius Davis. He at once disposed of me to his cousin, James Davis, who lived near my mother. This man was by religious profession a Methodist local preacher, a fervent exhorter, and a prayerful man. He had known my history from infancy. Times without number he had seen me a helpless little boy on his father's place—helpless because of his mother's cruel usage. He saw my condition, knew what I was then suffering, and from such a man I might reasonably have expected a large measure of kindness, but you see how it turned out. He set me at hard work of all kinds, made no allowance for my lameness and pain. Many a day have I followed the plow with my socks wet with blood, with my leg bones uncovered with flesh, and he knew it all. He would often call me to him, strip me and cowhide me unmercifully and to this day I cannot tell what it was for. I was obedient, sober and industrious, and it must have been that he loved to punish me because I was in his power. I was about seventeen years old. I saw my mother but once after going on his place. She went to Pennsylvania with a second husband and I never saw her afterwards. I have tried every means to find her but in vain.

About this time my only sister was sold to a man who lived far away and that was the last I ever knew

about her. So I was left entirely alone in the world. For three years I remained with Mr. Davis; then he sold me back to David Richardson. Then I fell into the hands of a good man. He treated me with kindness and showed himself a good deal of the christian he professed to be; he never whipped me and deserves the name of a kind master. I remained with him till I was twenty-eight years of age, and then I was free. I had gone to the Court House and learned by the papers deposited there by Mr. Davis, my first master, that the 17th day of April my bondage would end. For years I had looked forward for this time to come and you can well imagine the joy I felt when at last the time rolled around and released me from all human masters. A few days before my birthday Mr Richardson told me that according to arrangements made long ago I would be my own master in a day or two, and since it was so near at hand I might now consider myself at liberty to go where I pleased.

I was free but I was crippled, ignorant and without a cent of money. During my long stay with him I had frozen my feet and legs twice, not because of his carelessness but being frozen before, they would freeze again before I was hardly aware of the fact. From this cause I was unable to walk for many months at a time, and during this period I was taught to knit by the colored women, and to this day I knit my own socks, mittens, gloves and the like. It was about this time, when I was all alone in the world, when I had no kind and loving mother to teach me lessons of truth, purity and wisdom, no sympathetic father to take me by the hand and guide me in the right path, no

loving sister to embrace me and speak words of comfort and cheer.

But while fastened with the chains of slavery like Daniel in the lion's den, while suffering terrible afflictions, greater than Job, bowed down with sorrow and grief, while tortured in mind, body and soul, that I resolved to seek aid from a God on high, that he might save my soul from torment, and I came to Christ and asked him in mercy to take my feet from the miry clay and plant them upon the rock of eternal ages; and to this day I am looking up to Him as my only hope and support while battling with the stern realities of life.

I recall to mind, right here, a terrible scene that I witnessed on a plantation belonging to Mr. Bris, who owned about nine hundred slaves. At this time the slaves did not know how to run away; they would run to the woods, remain there and come back. One day three men ran away from the plantation and remained a number of months; when they came back he ordered them to be tied up to the whipping post. He used the lash himself; he lashed them until he no longer had strength to do it, then he ordered them to be taken down and sent to the next overseer, and ordered them to be again whipped, and for the second time they were beaten, and after he had whipped them as long as he could, they were taken down and sent to another overseer. He refused to whip them and ordered them back to their master, but they tried to escape. The master chased them on horseback, one gave himself up, the other two still running, the slave owner said he would have them, but sooner than be

taken, they ran and jumped into a red hot furnace and put an end to their lives.

I call to mind another sad and terrible scene which took place in Frederick City, Md. The slave owners bought up all the slaves they could, fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, friends, babes and gray haired old men, had them all brought to the jail and handcuffed together with an iron collar around their necks, with iron bolts riveted to the collars, then fastened to the chains on the handcuffs, then in this condition they were obliged to walk one hundred and fifty miles to the vessel where they were shipped to South Carolina, to be sold and suffer the pangs of slavery.

It was while witnessing such cold blooded scenes as this that caused me to cry out in the agony of my heart.—Hear me, O ye heavens, bear witness ye murmuring streams, hear me ye hosts of heaven, bear witness thou inspirer of eternal truth, thou maker and upholder of all things, that America has sealed her doom. This guilty nation must fall; God will utterly forsake the American Union in its guilt; he has heard the wails of millions who have gone up before me, as witness to the nation's hypocrisy and oppression. I feel an inspiration in my soul. How dare ye, O ye freeman, crucify the Goddess of Liberty. How dare ye follow in the footsteps of the ancient despoticisms which, forgetting their God, were utterly overthrown. Did not God destroy them? Did he not sweep them away with the breath of destruction? Can thou, boasted land of exact justice, equal rights and freedom to all, sustain thy crimes against a holy and just God when he pronounces thy doom? Woe to them tha.

convert the image of God into a thing causing agony and desolation, sorrow and death to millions!

Although I was free at last yet I was not allowed to go out of the state and return. If I did so I was liable to be taken up and sold again. I packed up my clothing and went a little distance to the house of an uncle who was also free. I made that place my home for a few months, and then turned my steps toward the City of Baltimore, where I hoped to get work. I remained in the city a few months and kept at work all the time. Then I went up into Harford County where I was employed by a man named Thomas Treat to work on his farm. I remained with him two months. Next I hired with Elisha Berry, a colored man, and chopped wood for two or three months. Then I hired with George Burroughs, a stone cutter, and worked with him at his trade. He was to give me one hundred dollars a year and teach me his business. I worked a year; then he stopped work and I never got all of my pay.

My next employer was Isaac Rogers, at Deer Creek, near where I had at last worked. He owned large iron works for the manufacture of pig iron. I was set to feed the furnace while in operation, and the rest of the time I was engaged in chopping wood and doing chores about the house and place. The first year I was with him I married a free woman who lived with Mr. Rogers. I then rented a house and for the first time in my life I had a home and shelter of my own. For sixteen years I lived with Mr. Rogers. He was a kind, considerate employer, but he had many rough men about him who ill-treated me in various ways. Mr. Rogers broke up his business and went away and

this left me to seek employment again. At once I secured work with William Gladding who lived near by. He owned a large farm, was unmarried, and my wife was also hired as housekeeper. I was to have sixteen dollars a month, rent free, and he was to board with me for six dollars a month. I worked with him for three years, until he was married. When he settled he owed me two hundred and thirty-five dollars. He was a miserable cheat and would not pay me for the wood I had found him for three years. I sued the demand and after seven years in the Courts I lost it because I was a poor black man and he a well-to-do white scoundrel. I bought seven acres of land about this time in the neighborhood and built a small house on it, which I still own. The land has on it rich deposits of chrome, and some day will be of considerable value. For three years I worked about the place at one thing and another till 1862 when I moved to Westminster some sixty miles away. I found employment there, and remained at work in that place for nearly fourteen years.

In this town there are about five hundred colored people, and about twelve hundred white people. The colored people were not allowed in the white schools, and are not yet allowed: neither are the colored people permitted to enter the churches. Although I was unschooled myself, it gave me great pain to see my brethren grow up in ignorance. Years before I was a free man I was converted. My religious experience had been a wonderful comfort to me. It sustained me in hours of suffering and filled me with a glorious hope of deliverance not only from all human bondage but from this poor body of sin and death. I had been able

to see beyond the stormes of this life to the blessed haven of rest where there is no night and the tears are wiped away from all eyes. It is not to be wondered at that I greatly desired to see churches erected where our people could hear the word of life, and be instructed in religious truth. I conversed with other interested people and we decided to make an effort to organize and build up a church. The white Methodist minister was called in. He organized us into a religious body, and gave us credentials. Five of us started out to raise funds in the north. Four of them soon become discouraged and returned. I went to Boston in the year 1866 where I was so substantially helped that I soon had a thousand dollars to forward for the building of a church and two teachers secured. They went to Westminster and there was a good school for four years that finally failed for lack of money. I was again sent out to collect funds and the school was revived, but for lack of all assistance from the state or town, and want of money it has been closed for a good while.

I have continued my work to build another church. In three years of wandering and working I have raised five hundred dollars, and the second church is now being slowly built. The hard times have been much against me, but for all that I have toiled on in the midst of disappointment, in a strange land and among strange faces. I cannot now expect to do much more for churches and schools. I must try to do something to sustain myself when age has unfitted me for all work. Even now I cannot command much wages; my lameness makes my movements slow, and during a day I cannot accomplish much at any work that I am

used to. I make a little from the sale of this small book.

But I am still working, toiling, although my pathway is strewn with thorns, and not flowers, the black cloud of prejudice hangs over me, men try to blacken and defame my character, and crush me, because they have the power in their hands, but I will fight my way through till I die, striving to raise means to educate and make christian men and women out of the now raw material. And I call upon all noble, honest, christian men and women who are interested in every good work of moral and christian reform, to aid me in my honest efforts to benefit a race that has been trampled upon worse than any that the sun has ever shown upon.

We sustain relations to the whole human family; we are children of one common parent, we are the heirs of one common inheritance; go to the wildest spot on earth, and find the blackest character which exists within the limits of the race, and will you not find in that dark character a relative, and brother, Ethiopia's son, as he lifts his hands to God.

The wild Karen, as he rushes from his dark jungle, ready for blood, the child of Erin as he comes in rags and poverty to our shores, are all brethren; we cannot divest ourselves of this relationship if we would. God has formed it for us, and whether we are willing to acknowledge the fact or not, the race is one wide and indissoluble fraternity. The black faced negro, the hunted Indian, and the proudest child of civilization, are of one blood, hence we find that God has given us mutual sympathy, one with another. He has created us with a feeling of relationship, and given

us a disposition to assist and save the fallen, and relieve the wants of the needy, he has designed that we should be mutual helpers and assistants, and he has placed us in a position of mutual dependence so that our relations may ever be recognized.

It is when man is displaying himself for the good of others that he seems most God-like, and if there is a time when he appears to have but little of the influence of depravity in his heart, it is when ministering like an angel of mercy to the wants and woes of life. Thanks be to God, that we occupy a spot on which intelligence, morality and religion have shed their mildest beams, and exerted their most happy influences, consequently we can look around and behold everywhere the objects of pity and commiseration, ignorance and heathenish degradation, arrest the attention everywhere; and pathetic appeals are made from every quarter. The object for which we live, is not to secure our own gratification, and minister to our own increasing desires. The good of others should be one of the most prominent objects of our lives, an object never to be forgotten. He who has never felt his bosom thrill with pity at the recital of scenes which are transpiring upon the earth; he who has not gazed with feelings of deep commiseration upon the millions who sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death, and has never made an effort to send them the means of civilization, and the religion of the cross, must be a stranger to the emotions which will crowd upon the human mind. He who understands his relations to his fellow creatures should be willing to acknowledge them.

Any man who casts his influence against a noble

missionary enterprise, casts it not only against the salvation of the heathens, but against the advancement and progress of civilization, he is an enemy of his race, and forfeits his claim to the name of man. There are a great many good men who seem to feel that they are under no obligation to aid in the elevation of the colored race; they think because the slave is free, and that his fetters have been burst asunder that the work is all completed, and have an absurd idea that they are able to build themselves up to a higher state of civilization, culture, refinement, morality and religion, build churches, schoolhouses, and educate the colored race, by their own unaided efforts. They say they have done their part, they have given their freedom, now let them shift for themselves.

But is it so? God and suffering millions give a negative reply. Men have no right to rest until want is driven from our borders; until virtue is respected and vice hated; until labor receives its due reward; until honest, intelligent, worthy colored men are respected whatever may be their pecuniary circumstances; until general intelligence shall be a characteristic of the people.

Men have no right to rest from toil until the millions of liberated freemen, who to-day groan upon southern soil, are free in mind and thought; until the spirit of prejudice is eradicated from the breasts of men; until bloodshed and cruel oppression are done away; they have no right to cease from toil until the thrones of tyrants are demolished, until aristocracies of birth, blood and wealth, are buried in one common grave, they have no right to rest from toil, until all over this

land of ours, the gospel has been preached and christianity embraced. Every act done in the work of human progress will ever live, every act which tends to the annihilation of error is a little rock started from the mountain top, which gathers force on its way downward, and starts others at every bound. Let me then start a little pebble, if nothing more; every act which tends to the establishment of the reign of truth, is a germ set in the soil which in time will become a mighty tree. Let me then plant a little acorn, that it may shoot up, and by the richness of its foliage and the statefulness of its form, add to the beauty and grandure of millennial plains.

This book professes to be a sketch of my life, and it surely is but a sketch. Only the barest outlines of the wretched picture are drawn. I am obliged to write it by means of other than my own hands. Could I use the pen and command the needful language it might be a more finished picture. My eyes have beheld horrors of which there is no mention here, my ears have listened to tales of cruelty and misery among the slaves that are enough to check ones heart with indignation and sympathy.

I remember when a boy, and in the City of Frederick, I saw about one hundred and fifty slaves marched out of the jail yard, handcuffed and chained together, bound for the south. At the head of this band were two men who had used their gifts as preachers. I distinctly recall that they were singing the following words:

Don't talk about suffering here below
But talk about love like Jesus,
My Saviour smiles and bids me come.

Dont talk about suffering here below
But talk about love like Jesus,
I hope to shout and never stop
Until I reach the mountain top.

Don't talk about suffering here below
But talk about love with Jesus,
Oh! Satan leave for I must go,
The Lord has called me from here below.

Don't talk about suffering here below
But talk about love like Jesus,
Jesus, my all, to Heaven has gone
Whom I fix my hopes upon.

Don't talk about suffering here below
But talk about love like Jesus.

This was a sight never to be forgotten to see and hear those poor men in the midst of their dreadful afflictions, singing such a hymn as that. It seems as if it should have melted the stones under their feet, but it did not touch the hearts of the hard men who had them in charge. But God surely heard their cry, for he who notes the sparrows fall and feeds the ravens, could never be deaf and blind to the agency of his immortal children. I recall another touching incident of the same nature. A slave living in Frederick City by the name of Larry Porter was owned by a man named Hogg. Porter was a devout christian and insisted upon attending Methodist meetings on Sunday where he led the singing. His master wanted him to work on Sundays, and finding he could not easily over-

come his slaves desires and religious scruples, he sold him to a Georgian trader. He was handcuffed and led away, and as he went through the streets he sang in his clear strong voice the following words:

How long, how long, how long,
Good Lord shall I suffer here,
Jesus my all to Heaven has gone,
How shall I suffer here.
Whom I fix my hopes upon,
How shall I suffer here.
How long, how long, how long,
Good Lord shall I suffer here,
The ship is about to enter,
See how I suffer here
Sailing from earth home to glory,
See how I suffer here.
Oh! how long, how long shall I suffer here?
A few more days in sorrow,
See how I suffer here,
Then to glory I will go
And be done suffering here.

I might easily go on telling these thrilling stories of captivity. Pictures of misery and wrongs are carved in my memory till I can scarcely look back at all without seeming to see again some scene of agony that was long ago impressed upon my memory. My back is still scored and scarred with the marks of a master's lash, but deep as these are my mind is deeper engraved with pictures of horror that will never be effaced. While there is great reason to be devoutly thankful for our delivery from slavery, yet it should be distinctly

kept in mind that while in one sense we are free, yet in another sense we are not free. While it is true that no owner whips us, and no auctioneer sells us yet the hands of the oppressors have left their cruel work upon us. Centuries of bondage have not only deprived us of the advantages of freedom in times past; but have crippled our capacity to receive the blessings of emancipation. We are like prisoners who have so long been kept in dungeons that the clear light of day is almost painful when once more allowed to enjoy it. We have so long been treated as things that when we are elevated to the rank of citizenship we find it hard to exercise its privileges as wisely and well as would like. We have known neither the educational advantages of schools nor the religious enlightenment of christian teaching. We have not even been allowed to pick up the crumbs that fell from the spiritual tables of our masters. We were set free on the soil of our oppressors, without money, without land or property of any kind, destitute of schools and churches, and forced to meet on every hand the scornful contempt of the men whose grasp had been wrenched away from us by the shear force of arms.

Then I say while in one sense (a legal one) we were free, in another sense we were still dependent upon our former masters. In the eyes of the law we were equal, yet by the force of circumstances we were half in bondage and in a large measure this is still true. Then surely it is the duty of all good citizens, all right-hearted people everywhere to aid us in becoming free, not only in "Word but in deed, and in truth." We are anxious to have homes of our own, and in the midst of them to have schools and churches as our

white brethren have. By these means we can sooner become useful citizens in this great republic of freedom. Only a few generations ago our forefathers were rude barbarians in the African wilds, and surely it is much to our credit that we are so ready to adopt the usages of civilized life, not only ready but anxious to learn anything and everything that will help us to be useful members of the community and good citizens of the nation. As yet let it be remembered we are not freemen but freedmen. We are but emancipated slaves, the law struck off our shackles and left us where we stood crippled and poor, with shoulders so long bent to bear a master's burden that we could not stand erect when it was removed. I am only one sufferer, unfit for hard work and obliged to travel while I can, that kind hearts and ready hands among our white brethren may keep me from the poor house when too infirm to help myself. Each one of these little books that I can sell is a small contribution to me that the buyer will not feel, and it is not too much to hope that he who reads it will not have spent his time in vain. I thought it would add some interest and value to the book if a few selected poems on slavery were added to my story, and accordingly the reader will find them and, I hope, to his liking. So I have come to the end of my narrative. With many thanks to the kind Providence that has moved my fellow creatures to aid me, and the wish and hope that the same hand will guide me safely to the end of this long and painful earthly pilgrimage.

THE FAREWELL OF A VIRGINIA SLAVE
MOTHER TO HER DAUGHTERS, SOLD
INTO SOUTHERN BONDAGE.

Gone, gone — sold and gone
To the rice-swamp, dark and lone,
Where the slave whip ceaseless swings,
Where the noisome insect stings,
Where the fever demon strews
Poison with the falling dews,
Where the sickly sunbeams glare
Through the hot and misty air.

Gone, gone — sold and gone
To the rice-swamps dark and lone,
From Virginia's hills and waters —
Woe is me, my stolen daughters.

Gone, gone — sold and gone
To the rice-swamp, dark and lone,
There no mother's eye is near them,
There no mother's ear can hear them,
Never when the torturing lash
Seams their backs with many a gash,
Shall a mother's kindness bless them
Or a mother's arms caress them.

Gone, gone — sold and gone
To the rice-swamp, dark and lone,
From Virginia's hills and waters —
Woe is me, my stolen daughters.

Gone, gone — sold and gone
To the rice-swamp, dark and lone,
O, when weary, sad and slow

From the fields at night they go
Faint with toil and racked with pain,
To their cheerless homes again,
There no brother's voice shall greet them,
There no father's welcome meets them.

Gone, gone — sold and gone
To the rice-swamp, dark and lone,
From Virginia's hills and waters —
Woe is me, my stolen daughters.

Gone, gone — sold and gone
To the rice-swamp, dark and lone,
From the tree whose shadow lay,
On their childhood's path of play —
From the cool spring where they drank —
Rock and hill and rivulet bank —
From the solemn house of prayer
And the Holy Counsel there.

Gone, gone — sold and gone
To the rice-swamp, dark and lone,
From Virginia's hills and waters,
Woe is me, my stolen daughters.

JOHN G. WHITTIER.

THE QUADROON GIRL.

The slaver in the broad lagoon
Lay moored with idle sail;
He waited for the rising moon
And for the evening gale.

Under the shore his boat was tied
And all her listless crew,

Watched the gray alligator slide
Into the still bayou.

The planter under his roof of thatch
Smoked thoughtfully and slow;
The slavers thumb was on the latch,
He seemed in haste to go.

Before them with her face upturned
In timid attitude,
Like one half curious, half amazed,
A Quadroon Maiden stood.

Her eyes were large and full of light,
Her arms and neck were bare,
No garment save a kirtle bright,
And her own long raven hair.

The soil is barren — the form is old,
The thoughtful planter said,
Then looked upon the slaver's gold,
And then upon the maid.

His heart within him was at strife
With such accursed gains,
For he knew whose passions gave her life,
Whose blood ran in her veins.

But the voice of nature was too weak;
He took the glittering gold!
Then pale as death grew the maiden's cheek,
Her hand as icy cold.

The slaver led her from the door,
He led her by the hand
To be his slave and paramour
In a strange and distant land.

